GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
LOK SABHA

UNSTARRED QUESTION NO:2511
ANSWERED ON:04.08.2015
Irregularities in PDS
Choudhary Col. (Retd) Sona Ram;Choudhary Shri Ram Tahal;Girri Shri Maheish;Hemamalini Smt. ;Jadhav Shri Prataprao Ganpatrao;K. Shri Parasuraman;Laguri Smt. Sakuntala;Ram Mohan Naidu Shri Kinjarapu;Ram Shri Vishnu Dayal;Yadav Shri Jay Prakash Narayan

Will the Minister of CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Government proposes to increasingly associate Information Technology in Public Distribution System (PDS) including installation of GPS in PDS vehicles, issuance of smart cards etc. to plug loopholes and check leakage of foodgrains, if so, the details thereof and the action taken thereon;

(b) whether the Government is formulating any concrete policy to check corruption/leakages in PDS, if so, the details thereof; and

(c) whether any action has been taken against the officials held responsible for corruption in PDS during the last three years and if so, the details thereof?

Answer

MINISTER OF CONSUMER AFFAIRS, FOOD & PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION
(SHRI RAM VILAS PASWAN)

(a): With a view to modernize the Targeted Public Distribution System (TPDS) and to plug loopholes and check leakage of foodgrains Government has initiated a plan scheme on 'End-to-end Compterisation of TPDS Operations' under 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) on cost sharing basis with the States/UTs with funding requirement of Rs. 884.07 crore, which includes Government of India's share of Rs. 489.37 crore and States/UTs share of Rs. 394.70 crore. Costs are being shared on 90:10 basis in respect of North Eastern States and on 50:50 basis with other States/UTs. This scheme comprises activities, namely, digitization of ration cards/beneficiary and other databases, computerization of supply-chain management, setting up of transparency portals, FPS automation etc. Presently there is no provision for installation of GPS in PDS vehicles or issuance of smart card based delivery of foodgrains under the above scheme.

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(b & c): The Public Distribution System (Control) Order, 2001 dated 31.08.2001 notified in exercise of the powers conferred by the section 3 of the Essential Commodities Act, 1955, mandates State / UT Governments to carry out all required action to ensure smooth functioning of TPDS. Under the said Order, the State / UT Governments are to take action against any person indulging in malpractices in TPDS. The Order has since been superseded by the TPDS (C) Order, 2015 dated 20.03.2015 issued in consonance with NFSA, 2013. The provisions of the PDS (C) Order, 2001 shall be effective against the corresponding provisions of the TPDS (C) Order, 2015 in States/UTs which have not implemented the NFSA or are implementing it only in part. An offence committed in violation of these Orders is liable for penal action under the EC Act, 1955. State/UT-wise details regarding action taken under clauses 8 & 9 of the PDS (Control) Order, 2001 during the last three years and current year is at Annex.

State/UT Governments have been directed in July 2006 to implement a 9-point action plan for streamlining the working of TPDS. Further, strengthening and streamlining of TPDS is a continuous endeavour. To improve functioning of TPDS to curb leakage / diversion of foodgrains, Government has been regularly issuing advisories and holding meetings, conferences, etc. wherein State/UT Governments are requested for review of lists of beneficiaries, improving offtake of allocated foodgrains, ensure timely availability of foodgrains at FPSs, greater transparency in functioning of TPDS, improved monitoring and vigilance at various levels, improving the viability of FPS operations, etc. NFSA, 2013, also contains measures for reforms in TPDS, to be undertaken progressively by the Central and State/UT Governments. These reforms inter alia include door-step delivery of foodgrains at the FPS, application of ICT tools, preference to public institutions/bodies in licensing of FPSs, etc.

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